



Wildfire risk rises as Western states dry out amid protracted heat wave

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Authorities in Western states warned of the rising risk of wildfires amid a protracted heat wave that has dried out the landscape while setting temperature records and putting lives at risk. Forecasters, meanwhile, said Thursday that some relief was due by the weekend.

California's top fire official said Wednesday that so far this year, the state has responded to more than 3,500 wildfires that have scorched nearly 325 square miles (842 square kilometers) — five times the average burned through July 10 in each of the past five years.

"We are not just in a fire season, but we are in a fire year," Joe Tyler, director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, said at a news conference.



Continued on Page 2

People use umbrellas to block the sun while waiting to take a photo at the "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign July 8, 2024, in Las Vegas. Associated Press

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Wildfire risk rises as Western states dry out amid protracted heat wave

Continued from Front

"Our winds and the recent heat wave have exacerbated the issue, consuming thousands of acres. So we need to be extra cautious." California crews working in scorching temperatures and single-digit humidity were battling numerous wildfires Thursday, including a stubborn 53-square-mile (137-square-kilometer) blaze that prompted evacuation orders for about 200 homes in the mountains of Santa Barbara County northwest of Los Angeles. It was 16% contained.

California's fires began in earnest in early June, following back-to-back wet winters that pulled the state out of drought but spawned abundant grasses that have since dried out. A June blitz of lightning ignited some of the fires, a risk that may return with thunderstorms in the Sierra Nevada this weekend, forecasters said.

Fire crews in Oregon continued Thursday to fight the Larch Creek Fire, which has grown to 16.6 square miles (43 square kilometers) of grassy areas since Tuesday. Lower temperatures and calming winds were helping their efforts but the local fire danger level remained extreme. One firefighter was treated for heat-related injuries.

Officials in Oregon and Washington state have imposed burn bans and other restrictions to avoid sparks. Campfires, operating chainsaws and target shooting are prohibited in most areas. Central Oregon limits use of chainsaws and grass mowing to certain hours, followed by a one-hour fire watch.

In Hawaii, Haleakala National Park on Maui was closed as firefighters battled a blaze on the slopes of a mountain. Visitors in more than 150 vehicles that had gone up Wednesday for the famous sunset views were not able to descend until around 4 a.m. Thursday because the narrow roads were blocked by fire crews.

No homes were immedi-

ately threatened but some residents were told to prepare for possible evacuations. The 40 mph (64 kph) wind speeds were a concern for firefighters, Maui Fire Department

or greater. The temperature hit 115 shortly before 1 p.m. at Harry Reid International Airport, and it could get hotter still before the sun goes down. It extends a newly broken record set

ing cold water, bus passes and rides to cooling stations to homeless people and anyone else in need. In California, officials in the Silicon Valley county of Santa Clara are investigat-

2-year-old and a baby in separate incidents, and in Nebraska, Omaha police say a boy died after being left in an SUV.

The U.S. heat wave came as the global temperature in June was a record warm for the 13th straight month and marked the 12th straight month that the world was 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, the European climate service Copernicus said. Most of this heat, trapped by human-caused climate change, is from long-term warming from greenhouse gases emitted by the burning of coal, oil and natural gas, scientists say.

"Climate change is real," California Gov. Gavin Newsom said at a news conference Wednesday. "Those extremes are here present every day in the great state of California."

Newsom said the state was prepared to fight the conflagrations.

Cal Fire uses 1,100 cameras and artificial intelligence to spot fires. The agency also has the largest fire suppression aircraft fleet in the world, according to Newsom. This year, the state will add 24 privately owned planes to its force and will begin using seven ex-military planes provided by the federal government. The state has added 3,000 firefighters since 2018 and is committed to hiring an additional 2,400 in the next five years.

In southern New Mexico, heavy rain produced flash flooding on top of wildfire burn scars for the second day in a row Wednesday, forcing an estimated 1,000 residents to flee their homes in Ruidoso, city spokesperson Kerry Gladden said.

She said emergency responders had conducted more than 30 water rescues but there were no immediate reports of deaths or serious injuries. She said most bridges over rivers and streams were closed, as was U.S. Highway 70 — one of the main arteries into town — while crews removed debris. □



Mark Paulson, a Public Response and Code Enforcement officer, checks on Deb Billet, 66, before calling an ambulance to take her to a hospital for heat-related symptoms Wednesday, July 10, 2024, in Henderson, Nev.

Associated Press

spokesperson Chris Stankis said. "The winds are a little stronger than our typical tradewinds," he said.

More than 63 million people around the U.S. remained under heat alerts Thursday, a significant reduction from earlier this week.

The National Weather Service said the combination of power outages from Hurricane Beryl and heat indices up to 106 degrees Fahrenheit (41 Celsius) prompted heat advisories across parts of southeast Texas. In Western states, where dozens of locations tied or broke heat records since the weekend, torrid conditions were expected through Friday before some cooling.

Las Vegas on Thursday simmered into a record sixth consecutive day of temperatures at 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46.1 Celsius)

Wednesday when Las Vegas reached 118 F (47.8 C), toppling the old record of four consecutive days set in July 2005, according to the National Weather Service. Forecasters called it an unprecedented heat wave, even for desert standards. Meteorologist Morgan Stessman said the Las Vegas area has been under an excessive heat warning on three separate occasions this year, totaling about 12 days of dangerous heat with little relief even after the sun goes down. The city also has broken 18 heat records since June 1, well before the official start of summer, including an all-time high of 120 F (48.8 C) set on Sunday.

In Henderson, Nevada, officers from the Office of Public Response drove around Wednesday offer-

ing 19 potential heat-related deaths, including three homeless individuals, the county's Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office said in a statement Thursday.

The Oregon state medical examiner reported Thursday four new potentially heat-related deaths, bringing to 14 the total number of deaths since the heat wave began. Two were from Washington County, including the second woman, and the other two were from Jackson and Linn counties.

Heat was also blamed for a motorcyclist's death last weekend in Death Valley National Park and the National Park Service is investigating the third death of a Grand Canyon hiker in recent weeks.

Arizona authorities are investigating deaths of a

U.S. sanctions a Venezuela gang for spreading criminal activity across Latin America

By JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The Biden administration on Thursday sanctioned a Venezuelan gang allegedly behind a spree of kidnappings, extortion and other violent crimes tied to migrants that have spread across Latin America and the United States.

The U.S. also offered a \$12 million reward for the arrest of three leaders of Tren de Aragua, which now joins the MS-13 gang from El Salvador and the Mafia-styled Camorra from Italy on a list of transnational criminal organizations banned from doing business in the U.S.

"Tren de Aragua poses a deadly criminal threat across the region," the U.S. Treasury Department said in a statement, adding that it often preys on vulnerable populations such as migrant women and girls for sex trafficking.

"When victims seek to escape this exploitation, Tren de Aragua members often kill them and publicize their deaths as a threat to others," the statement added. The Tren de Aragua traces its origins to more than a decade ago, to an infamously lawless prison in the central state of Aragua where a number of hardened criminals were held. But it has expanded in recent years



Soldiers raid the Tocarón Penitentiary Center, in Tocarón, Venezuela, Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023. The Tren de Aragua gang originated at the prison.

as millions of desperate Venezuelans fled President Nicolás Maduro's rule and migrated to other parts of Latin America or the U.S. Authorities in countries such as Colombia, Peru and Ecuador — with large populations of Venezuelan migrants — have accused the group of being behind a spree of violent crimes in a region that has long had some of the highest murder rates in the world.

Initially its focus was exploiting Venezuelan migrants through loan sharking, human trafficking and the

smuggling of contraband goods to and from Venezuela.

But as the Venezuelan diaspora has settled more permanently abroad, it has joined — and sometimes clashed — with homegrown criminal syndicates engaged in drug trafficking, extortion of local businesses and murders for hire. Among the groups the Treasury Department said the gang has teamed up with is Primeiro Comando da Capital, a notorious organized crime group out of Brazil that has also been

sanctioned by the U.S.

Earlier this year, prosecutors in Chile blamed the gang, whose name means "train" in Spanish, for the killing of a Venezuelan army official who had sought refuge in that country after partaking in a failed plot to overthrow Maduro.

"The Tren de Aragua is not a vertically integrated criminal structure, but rather a federation of different gangs," said Jeremy McDermott, the Colombia-based co-director of InSight Crime, which this month published a report

on the gang's expansion.

"It has now become a franchise name for Venezuelan criminal structures operating in the region, with weakening coherence now that its home prison base is no more," McDermott said.

The group is led by Hector Guerrero, who was jailed years ago for killing a police officer, according to InSight Crime. Guerrero, better known by his alias El Nino, or Spanish for the "boy," later escaped and then was recaptured in 2013, returning to the prison in Aragua where the criminal enterprise was then headquartered.

He fled prison again more recently, as Venezuelan authorities tried to reassert control over its prison population.

His current whereabouts are unknown but the U.S. State Department, which has offered up to \$12 million for his arrest and that of two other gang leaders, said it believes Guerrero and Giovanni San Vicente, another target of the U.S. bounty, are believed to be living in Colombia.

Sen. Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican who co-chairs the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, has warned that if left unchecked, the Tren de Aragua could also start terrorizing American cities. □

New York's top court allows 'equal rights' amendment to appear on November ballot

By ANTHONY IZAGUIRRE
Associated Press

A proposed amendment to New York's constitution to bar discrimination over "gender identity" and "pregnancy outcomes" will appear on the ballot this November, the state's high court ruled Thursday.

The decision from the Court of Appeals affirms a lower court ruling from June, dismissing an appeal "upon the ground that no substantial constitutional question is directly involved."

Democrats are hoping the ballot question will drive turnout in their favor this fall as the party frames the "equal rights" amendment as a way to protect abortion rights. Republicans also have begun to strategize around the proposed amendment, moving to animate voters against the protections it might offer to transgender people.

A Republican state lawmaker had sued to block the ballot question, arguing that Democrats in the Legislature made a technical error when

passing the amendment. The state's Constitution currently bans discrimination based on race, color, creed or religion. The proposed amendment would add ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes and reproductive health care and autonomy.

It would not explicitly protect abortion rights in New York, where access to the procedure is already con-



The New York Capitol is seen, June 30, 2022, in Albany, N.Y.

Associated Press

sidered very safe. Instead, the proposed amendment would stop a person from being discriminated against for having an abortion.

The ballot question has been a crucial part of Democrats' election strategy in New York. The party has tried to center

key House races in New York on abortion access, warning voters that Republicans would try to curtail access to the procedure and betting that Democrats would cast ballots to protect abortion rights after the overturning of Roe v. Wade. □

Group sues federal government, claims it ignores harms of idle offshore oil and gas infrastructure

By JACK BROOK
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — An environmental group is suing the federal government to force the U.S. Department of Interior to reassess the long-term environmental effects of delays in shutting down inactive oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Washington, D.C., by the nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity on Thursday, argues that the department has failed to properly account for harms caused by deteriorating, unused wells and other inactive oil and gas infrastructure over the past two decades.

"What we have now in the Gulf of Mexico is a mess of leaky wells, rusty platforms, and corroding pipelines created by the oil and gas industry, and that's unacceptable," said Kristen Monsell, oceans program litigation director for the nonprofit. "The industry makes a huge profit off what they extract from public waters in the Gulf, and it's only fair that they be the ones to pay for clean-up rather than leaving it to the taxpayers."

The lawsuit includes the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, which oversees offshore safety and environmental regulations, and the Bureau



Oil well workers prepare to plug an orphaned well on the Rooke family ranch, May 18, 2021, near Refugio, Texas.

of Ocean Energy Management, which manages oil and gas development in federal waters.

A spokesperson for the department, which includes both bureaus, declined to comment.

The Department of Interior last assessed the impact of decommissioning offshore oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico in 2005 and 1985.

The lawsuit claims those studies are "outdated" and falsely assumed that inactive Gulf wells would be permanently plugged and

platforms removed within the timespan established by federal law no later than 3 years for wells and 5 years for platforms.

More than 2,700 oil wells and 500 platforms in the Gulf of Mexico had missed federal deadlines for decommissioning as of June 2023, according to a report from the Government Accountability Office cited in the lawsuit. Another GAO report from 2021 found that the federal government has authorized over 97% of seafloor pipelines in the Gulf of Mexico to be decommissioned in

place, even though pipelines are supposed to be removed from the seafloor. "Once they're no longer being used, their supposed to be cleaned and capped and removed," said Frank Rusco, director of natural resources and environment for GAO. "What we found is that Interior had not effectively implemented regulations, they had just sort of defaulted to leaving the stuff in place."

Federal law requires a new assessment should be conducted when new information or changed cir-

cumstances indicate environmental impacts not previously considered such as the norm of leaving pipelines in place or overdue decommissioning for other infrastructure, Center for Biological Diversity's Monsell points out. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management states on its website that it is preparing a new assessment but does not provide a timeline. It did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The lawsuit argues that the idle offshore infrastructure threatens endangered and federally protected species in the Gulf of Mexico such as giant manta rays, loggerhead sea turtles and West Indian manatees. Aging drilling platforms and unplugged oil wells are known to increase the risk of pollution from spills and the release of greenhouse gases. Scott Lauermann, a spokesperson for the American Petroleum Institute, the oil and gas industry's national trade association, said the industry is committed to "responsible operations."

"Our members continue to support a transparent and balanced regulatory framework that promotes responsible development of resources and the safe and timely decommissioning of infrastructure," Lauermann said. □

Theater festivals offer to give up their grants if DeSantis restores funding for Florida arts groups



Michel Hausmann, co-founder and director of Miami New Drama, stands in the theater, Wednesday, June 26, 2024, in Miami Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

By MIKE SCHNEIDER
Associated Press

Leaders of two performing arts festivals said Thursday that they would gladly give up their grants if Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis restores the \$32 million in state funding he nixed for more than 600 Florida arts groups, explaining the reason for his veto as being because the two theatrical events were "a sexual festival."

Leaders of The Orlando Fringe and Tampa Fringe described the governor's description as inaccurate on Thursday at a news con-

ference, but they said it was important for the state's arts groups to be funded because they play critical roles in their communities. The Orlando festival had been slated to get \$70,500, and the Tampa festival was in line to receive \$7,500 before the veto.

Asked to respond to the letter, a DeSantis spokeswoman referred to the governor's June 27 remarks when he cited the Fringe festivals as something to which taxpayers would be reluctant to have their money directed.

"When I see money being spent that way, I have to be the one who stands up for taxpayers and say, 'You know what? That is an inappropriate use of taxpayer dollars,'" DeSantis said.

Critics decried the veto, saying it was an extension of DeSantis' culture wars in which he has supported laws limiting what can be said in classrooms about sexual orientation and gender identity and prohibiting the teaching of an academic framework outlining the ways systemic racism is part of American society. □

China tells NATO not to create chaos in Asia and rejects label of 'enabler' of Russia's Ukraine war



Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands during their meeting on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, July 3, 2024.

Associated Press

By **KEN MORITSUGU**
Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China accused NATO on Thursday of seeking security at the expense of others and told the alliance not to bring the same "chaos" to Asia, a reflection of its determination to oppose strengthening ties between NATO members and Asian nations such as Japan, South Korea and the Philippines. The statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesperson came a day after NATO labeled China a "decisive enabler" of Russia's war against Ukraine.

"NATO hyping up China's responsibility on the Ukraine issue is unreasonable and has sinister motives," spokesperson Lin Jian said at a daily briefing. He maintained that China has a fair and objective stance on the Ukraine issue.

China has broken with the United States and its European allies over the war in Ukraine, refusing to condemn Russia's invasion or even to refer to it as an act of aggression in deference to Moscow. Its trade with Russia has grown since the invasion, at least partially offsetting the impact of Western sanctions.

NATO, in a statement issued at a summit in Washington, said China has become an

enabler of the war through its "no-limits partnership" with Russia and its large-scale support for Russia's defense industrial base.

Lin said China's trade with Russia is legitimate and reasonable and based on World Trade Organization rules.

He said NATO's "so-called security" comes at the cost of the security of other countries. China has backed Russia's contention that NATO expansion posed a threat to Russia, whose attack on Ukraine has only strengthened the alliance, leading to Sweden and Finland becoming formal members.

China has expressed concern about NATO's budding relationships with countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea sent their leaders or deputies to the NATO summit this week.

"China urges NATO to ... stop interfering in China's internal politics and smearing China's image and not create chaos in the Asia-Pacific after creating turmoil in Europe," Lin said.

Chinese troops are in Belarus this week for joint drills near the border with Poland, a NATO member. The exercises are the first with Belarus, an ally of Rus-

sia, with which it shares a single-party system under President Alexander Lu-

kashenko, whose regime cracked down brutally on 2020 mass protests against his rule.

Lin described the joint training as a normal military operation that is not directed at any particular country. China is a key player in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which includes a strong military element involving Russia and several Central Asian nations, India and, most recently, Belarus. That is seen as creating a bulwark against Western influence in the region, but also tensions over rising Chinese influence in what Russia considers its political backyard made up of former parts of the Soviet Union, which included Belarus.

Earlier this month, Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping attended a meeting of leaders or top officials from the 10 SCO countries in Kazakhstan at which Putin reiterated his demand that Ukraine withdraw its troops from parts of the country occupied by Russia.

Ukraine has firmly rejected that, along with a Chinese peace proposal that makes no mention of the return of Ukrainian territory to the government in Kyiv. China and Russia have closely aligned their foreign policies to oppose the West, even as Russia grows increasingly reliant on China as a purchaser of its oil and gas that make up the bulk of its foreign trade. □



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Election officials push back against draft federal rule for reporting potential cyberattacks

By **CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY**
Associated Press
SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— A group of state election officials is urging the nation's cybersecurity agency to revise a draft rule that would require election offices to disclose suspected cyberattacks to the federal government, casting the mandate as too burdensome on overworked local officials.

The new rule is the result of a 2022 federal law that directed the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to develop regulations that require certain entities to report potential cybersecurity breaches or ransomware attacks to the agency. Election offices fall under the requirement because their systems are considered critical infrastructure, along with the nation's banks, nuclear power plants and dams.

In a letter, the executive board of the National Association of Secretaries of State asked CISA to consider making the rule voluntary, limit the types of information requested and more clearly



Jen Easterly, director of the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, speaks at a meeting, Feb. 16, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

define what types of cyber incidents would trigger a report. The proposed rule says state and local election offices must report suspected breaches within 72 hours. The association is holding its summer conference this week in Puerto Rico, and some state election officials

have been discussing their concerns directly with CISA Director Jen Easterly, who is attending. Easterly said in an interview Wednesday that she has been reviewing the group's letter along with comments submitted individually by state election officials. She said her agency

would consider the feedback and adjust as necessary. The rule is not expected to be finalized until sometime next year.

"CISA was stood up to largely be a voluntary agency, and it's our magic. It is how we've been able to build success," Easterly said, noting the

agency held multiple sessions to gather feedback. "We're taking all the comments on board. We will integrate them into the final rule."

Utah Lt Gov. Deidre Henderson, who oversees elections in the state, said she was concerned about federal intrusion into state responsibilities. She said states must operate independently of the federal government in administering elections. "It's one thing to regulate. They're regulators; we are operators," she said. "We actually have to perform these functions. And that rule is an overreach." West Virginia Secretary of State Mac Warner agreed, saying CISA had gone too far in drafting the rule.

"Let's work together in solving this, but don't come out with edicts and say you must do this, you must report," Warner said.

Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon said he would encourage agency officials to take a measured approach, saying he understood why it was important for CISA to collect the information. □

Mexico's most dangerous city for police suffers simultaneous attacks that kill 2 more officers

By **MARK STEVENSON**
Associated Press
MEXICO CITY (AP)

— Two police officers were shot to death in the embattled Mexican city of Celaya amid a wave of targeted attacks that authorities said Thursday were likely carried out by a drug cartel.

A total of 18 Celaya police officers have been shot to death so far this year, making the city of a half million inhabitants probably the most dangerous city in the hemisphere for police.

"This is something that worries us a lot, and more than that it hurts," President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said of the attacks.

Authorities confirmed that gunmen opened fire on police in at least four different locations in and around Celaya on Wednesday. Police sources and the federal government said the brutal

Santa Rosa de Lima gang appears to have been behind the attacks.

Celaya is located in the north-central state of Guanajuato, which has the highest number of homicides of any state in Mexico, largely due to drug car-

tel and gang turf wars.

An employee of the 300-member Celaya police force who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter said that gunmen opened fire on three unarmed municipal traffic officers while they

were setting up a checkpoint to check vehicle registrations.

The employee said two officers died in the attack and a third was wounded and in stable condition at a local hospital.

López Obrador said the attacks have become brutal and indiscriminate, and blamed lenient or corrupt judges. "Why bother the traffic cops?" López Obrador said. "Moreover, they were not carrying guns."

The president said the attacks may have been related to a judge's decision in June to grant a form of bail release to the son of the imprisoned founder of the Santa Rosa gang. The son had been arrested in January on charges of illegal possession of weapons and drugs.

López Obrador on Thursday displayed a report of the

attacks, indicating one set of gunmen attacked the traffic officers on a street in broad daylight. Soon after, gunmen hit another police patrol car with bullets, but apparently caused no injuries, and then sprayed a local police building with gunfire, also with no apparent injuries.

But police also came under attack later Wednesday in the nearby town of Villagran, 12 miles (20 kilometers) west of Celaya, reportedly wounding an officer seriously.

The Celaya police employee said members of the force feel they have not been given adequate support by the federal and state governments, and left the relatively small local police contingent to deal with the vicious Santa Rosa gang mostly alone. □



Municipal police officers patrol a neighborhood in Celaya, Guanajuato state, Mexico, Feb. 28, 2024.

Associated Press

Coleccion Aruba gains international attention

Recently, Aruba's platform Coleccion Aruba has been featured in international news. The authorities have informed that Ms. Ali Rogin, a reporter and correspondent for PBS News, produced a news segment about how climate change is affecting small, vulnerable nations.

For this occasion, she focused on Tuvalu, an island nation consisting of seven islands in the Pacific that is slowly disappearing. At the same time, Ms. Rogin highlighted the digital portal Coleccion Aruba, emphasizing the importance of preserving archives, documents, and recordings that are cultural heritages vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Coleccion.aw is the largest digital archive in Papiamentu and provides free access to digital archives

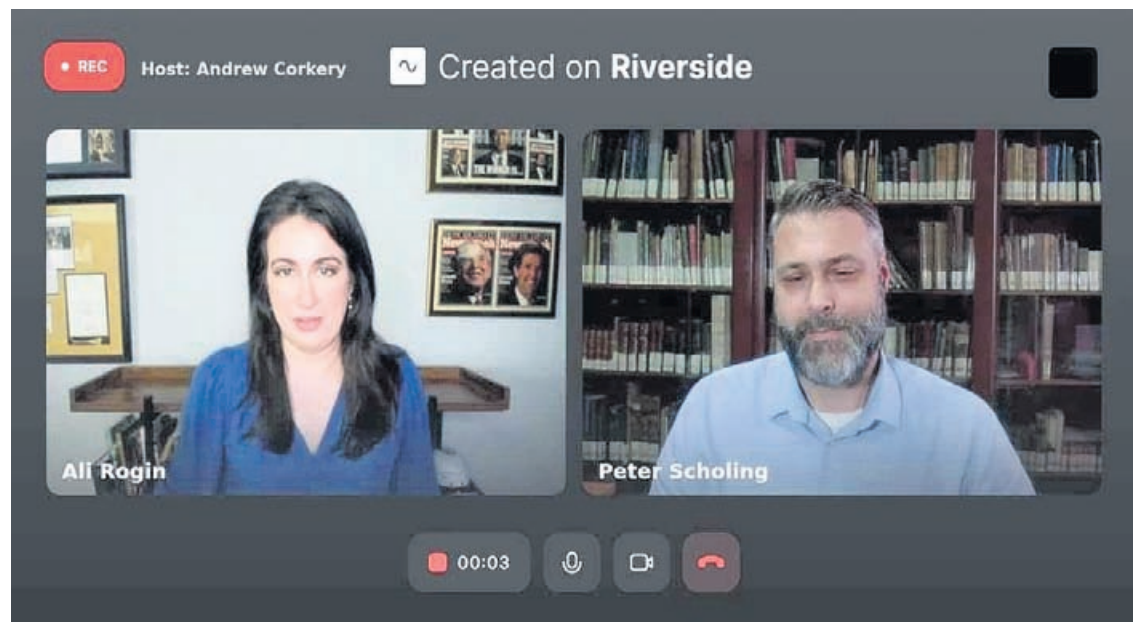
of documents, photos, videos, and recordings from Aruba.

Effects of Climate Change

For the Tuvalu segment, the reporter interviewed a Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Simon Kofe, and a United Nations representative from Tuvalu, Mr. Tapugao Falefou, who explained the challenges this small country faces due to climate change. Ms. Rogin explained that climate change not only damages infrastructure but also poses a danger to archives, documents, and other artifacts, as these can be destroyed, leading to the loss of an important part of a country's general and cultural history.

Importance of Document Digitization

During the over six-minute recording, the reporter interviewed Ms. Kate Knibbs,



who wrote an article about the collaboration between Coleccion Aruba and Internet Archive, the digital platform that hosts Coleccion Aruba. Ms. Knibbs elaborated on the importance of digitizing documents.

Coleccion Aruba

For the Coleccion Aruba part, the PBS News reporter

interviewed Mr. Peter Scholing, a researcher at the National Library of Aruba and the initiator of Coleccion Aruba, as well as historian and author Dr. Adi Martis.

Mr. Scholing explained why it is important to preserve cultural heritage digitally, especially now with rising

temperatures due to climate change. Dr. Martis provided information on how useful Coleccion Aruba is for his research, for instance, when he was investigating slavery in Aruba. □

You can watch the news segment here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3cSL2xFNOLU>.

Installing new bins with double capacity around our city center

As part of the revitalization efforts in Oranjestad, a series of maintenance and improvement works are being carried out in our city center. Now it's time to expand the waste collection capacity to help keep our city center clean, thereby improving hygiene and aesthetics. All these efforts ultimately aim to sustain the commercial viability of the area.

It's important to note that cleanliness is a factor that requires constant attention. Recently, in June, general

maintenance and cleaning work were carried out on G.F. Betico Croes Street, where, among other things, long-overdue tree trimming took place. One of the issues was that the trash bins were filling up quickly and sometimes overflowing, which is an unsightly view for all visitors and frequenters of the area.

The new trash bins are made entirely from recycled plastic, in collaboration with Plastic Beach Party, a non-profit organization that recycles plastic

in Aruba. With the installation of the new bins, the goal is not only to increase capacity but also to introduce the concept of waste separation, offering a separate bin for plastic waste. This is an investment of over 70,000 florins by the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Communication, and Sustainable Development.

'In the future, there will be more separation options, but this is a good start,' according to Minister Geoffrey Wever. 'We are committed to making Oranjestad a cleaner, more accessible and vibrant place for both residents and visitors. The installation of the new bins is part of a broader initiative to improve the overall experience in our city. Maintaining cleanliness is crucial for the well-being of our community,' stated the official.

We appreciate the support and cooperation of our community and visitors as we continue step-by-step with these important maintenance and improvement works. □




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Aruba to me

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For today we received a lovely message from **Donna Ross**.

She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is my little slice of heaven on earth! As a Philadelphian at heart, I'm thrilled to have celebrated my 60th birthday with my loved ones at Eagle Aruba Resort. We had an unforgettable party on July

6th, surrounded by stunning beaches, crystal-clear waters, and amazing friends and family from across the East Coast - Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, and Maryland.

I want to extend a huge thank you to the entire Eagle Aruba team for making our celebration so special. Jerry Lascase, our event coordinator, was a dream to work with - was creative, easy to work with and expertly coordinated all vendors and Eagle Aruba departments.. Nelida Rodriguez was always helpful and gracious with owner services. Rafael Wever and Maria made reservations a breeze. The front desk team - Louisanne, Christian, Ryan, Marvick, and others - treated our guests with kindness and respect.

I also want to thank Richard Roy for his hard work in upgrading the resort. And Kimberly Geerman, our fabulous mixologist, wowed us with her Mona Lisa smile and creative cocktails! Her spirit of Aruban hospitality was contagious. Thank you all for making my birthday party an unforgettable experience - I feel like I'm coming home every time I step foot on this beautiful island!"



Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!

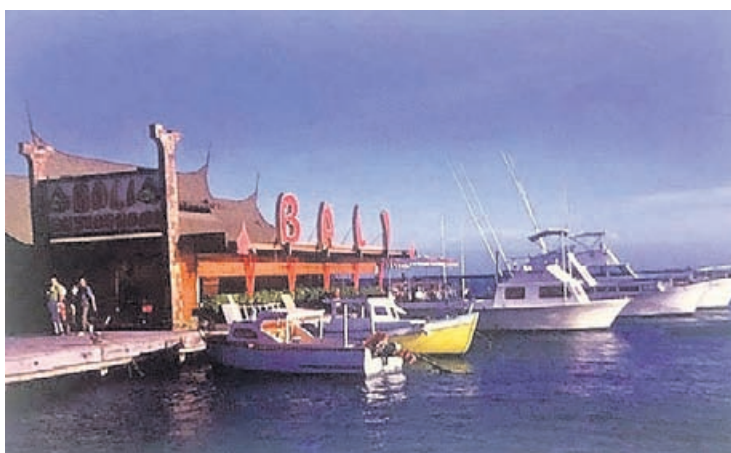


The Bali Restaurant: a touristic hot spot and lost gem on the island

(Oranjestad)—Once located in what is now the Renaissance Marina, the Bali Restaurant was once both a touristic and local hot spot, and nowadays it's considered a forgotten gem on the island.

Known as "the floating restaurant", Bali first opened in 1955 by Willem "Bill" Strijland, who had experience in Javanese cuisine. At the time, the restaurant was pretty exclusive—with space to host only 25 guests. Yet, 4 years later, it was named the best restaurant in the Caribbean by the Caribbean Tourist Association.

The restaurant was probably most iconic for its Javanese-inspired exterior with



its pointy, slanted roofs. However, the first version of Bali did not look like that at all but was still considered as one of the most popular restaurants on the island at the time. The restaurant saw three different owners during its existence, during which it underwent various renovations and rebranding.

In 1964, the restaurant was taken over by Karel "Carl" Schmand. Over the years, the restaurant needed constant renovation and repair, mainly due to its vulnerability to leaks and the unstable pillars underneath the foundation. However, the biggest change made to the restaurant happened

in the year 1970—still under the ownership of Schmand, when it got its iconic pointy roofs. The restaurant was also expanded to host a total of 85 guests. This was "The New Bali", who had its official (re)opening in 1972.

After 1972, when Ronny Schmand took over, the restaurant saw yet another expansion; this time complete with a long bar and dance floor, where guests enjoyed live music from legendary Aruban musician and composer, Toti Arends.

After 1989, the restaurant was again handed over to other owners, and since then suffered from unstable pillars underneath the foundation, resulting in various

leaks and overflowing of water into the restaurant. And as most great things come to an end, so did the survival and maintenance of the Bali Restaurant. However, folks today still reminisce its legacy, and it's now considered a lost monument.

Be apart of the conversation: if you or any family member of yours have a memory of the Bali restaurant, whether it be a picture or just a story, share it with us! We would love to see this legendary hot spot through the lens of our visitors!

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Dining in? Try making a local favorite

How to make "pan bati"

(Oranjestad)—If you're ever up for an Aruban snack, try making another Aruban classic appetizer called Pan Bati. Similar to a pancake both in appearance and cooking, this is a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Ingredients:

2 cups of all purpose flour
1 cup grams of fine cornmeal (we recommend the Harina PAN brand)
2 tbsp baking powder
1 1/3 cup of milk
1 pinch of salt
2 tbsp of granulated sugar
Oil for cooking

Instructions:

Add all the dry ingredients in a bowl first, and stir until well mixed. Then add the milk and beat until reached a pancake-like consistency. If more moisture is needed, add some water until reached desired consistency.

In a hot pan with oil, pour in enough batter to cover the bottom of the pan. Just like pancakes, flip the pan bati when one side turns golden brown. When your pan bati is ready, place on a plate and cover with a clean kitchen towel.

Traditionally, pan bati is cut in triangle pieces, and is often eaten as a side dish with soup, fried fish or stews. However, it is also casually enjoyed with some butter and cheese on top! ☐



Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Ayo

Ajo, or Ayo, is a word with Arawak-Indian origin. A (or Ha) is an Indo-Antillean generalizing word. If you were to change a part of the word "Ayo", namely 'Yo', to 'Yu' and make 'Ayu', it would mean "white."

However, as we now know, the name of the neighborhood is 'Ayo'. The word 'Yo' stands for Yocahu, which is another word for 'creator' in Arawak/Taino and in the Papiamentu spoken



today, 'Ayo' means 'bye'.

At Ayo, you can find some of the most well known rock formations. These formations became a well loved and visited attraction at Aruba that is held in high regards by both tourists and locals alike.

If you'd like to know more about the rock formations at Ayo, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all about its location and history.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; A.

**Alto Vista**

This word combination can be roughly translated to a 'high point of view' and the neighborhood received this name from the Hill.

In the surrounding areas, Domingo Antonia Silvestre built his by his own means the very first chapel or church of Aruba. The walls of this church were made with rocks but the roof was made of dry corn stalks. The church was inaugurated by father Pablo Algemesi

If you'd like to know more about the Alto Vista Church's beautiful history, stay tuned for our article where we tell you all you need to know about it for when you visit it.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; AV.





For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the casca-

bel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cucularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color. The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and

Unique fauna of Aruba

lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in

a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/> □



Keeping up with the conniving spider... Nanzi fools Cha Tiger

Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for

him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger

ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth



what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children..."

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch. Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife. □

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi



CROSSWORD

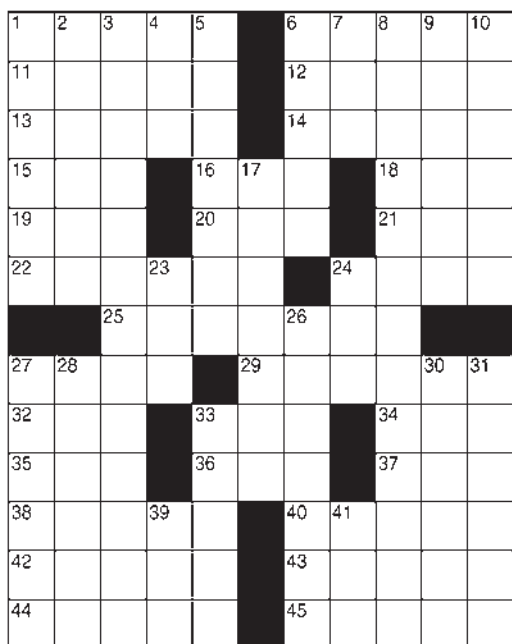
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 37 Some amount of
1 Detest
6 "The Merry Widow" composer
11 Baseball's Pee Wee
12 Give a speech
13 School group
14 Writer Carr
15 Vacuum's lack
16 Screening org.
18 Seine water
19 Bad-minton need
20 Gusher flow
21 Demand
22 On the beach
24 Pants part
25 Warned
27 Orange cover
29 Civil libertarian's concern
32 Wrap up
33 — Fernando
34 Slippery one
35 Derisive cry
36 "Gangnam Style" singer

DOWN

- 37 Some amount of
38 Eat away
40 Not wordy
42 Light unit
43 Writer Joyce
44 Rider's mount
45 Secret meeting
1 Secret stuff
2 Contradicts
3 Family life, figuratively
4 CIA's forerunner
5 Make good as new
6 From the area
7 Pitcher's stat
8 In fine fettle
9 Comfortable
10 Chastise
17 Western peaks
23 Outdated
24 Tapped item
26 Toddler
27 Luke and Leia, e.g.
28 Needing change
30 Past and future
31 Most crafty
33 Forgo frugality
39 Ruby of films
41 Attention



4-19

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

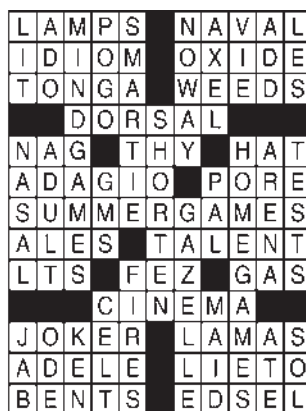
4-19

CRYPTOQUOTE

JHC YGF CJI MJDF OGFH YGF
UAER YB UFDJAH YAWGY AH J
LXC OJE DBUF SJAHQXK YGJH
YGF UAER AY YBBR YB

LKBEEBD. — JHJAE HAH

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: OUR WISDOM COMES FROM OUR EXPERIENCE, AND OUR EXPERIENCE COMES FROM OUR FOOLISHNESS. — SACHA GUITRY



Yesterday's answer

- 6 From the area
7 Pitcher's stat
8 In fine fettle
9 Comfortable
10 Chastise
17 Western peaks
23 Outdated
24 Tapped item
26 Toddler
27 Luke and Leia, e.g.
28 Needing change
30 Past and future
31 Most crafty
33 Forgo frugality
39 Ruby of films
41 Attention

Cruise ship Schedule: July 01 - July 30 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	04	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	09	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	20.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	10	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	16	CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1
WED	17	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	23	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
TUE	30	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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EU accepts Apple pledge to let rivals access 'tap to pay' iPhone tech to resolve antitrust case



The logo of Apple is illuminated at a store in the city center in Munich, Germany, on Dec. 16, 2020.

By **KELVIN CHAN**
AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — The European Union on Thursday accepted Apple's pledge to open its "tap to pay" iPhone payment system to rivals as a way to resolve an antitrust case and head off a potentially hefty fine. The European Commission, the EU's executive arm and top antitrust enforcer, said it approved the commitments that Apple offered earlier this year and will make them legally binding. Regulators had accused Apple in 2022 of abusing its dominant position by

limiting access to its mobile payment technology. Apple responded by proposing in January to allow third-party mobile wallet and payment service providers access to the contactless payment function in its iOS operating system. After Apple tweaked its proposals following testing and feedback, the commission said those "final commitments" would address its competition concerns. "Today's commitments end our Apple Pay investigation," Margrethe Vestager, the commission's

executive vice-president for competition policy, told a press briefing in Brussels. "The commitments bring important changes to how Apple operates in Europe to the benefit of competitors and customers." Competition watchdogs on both sides of the Atlantic have been investigating Apple's payment tech. A sweeping Justice Depart-

ment lawsuit filed in March accuses the company of engineering an illegal monopoly in smartphones, including charges that it limits access to contactless payment for third-party digital wallets. The EU deal promises more choice for Europeans. □

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Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
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Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
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WEEK 26
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WEEK 27
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Price range: \$3,600.00 - \$7,000.00

Presidential suites
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Price range: \$7,200.00 - \$8,500.00

WEEK 28
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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
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Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Narcotics Anonymous
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Fundacion Contra Violencia
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Child Abuse Prevention
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Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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In the chilling thriller 'Longlegs,' Maika Monroe cuts like a knife

By **JAKE COYLE**
AP Film Writer

A chilling, half-remembered encounter from childhood looms over "Longlegs," Osgood Perkins' stylishly composed 1990s-set horror film about a young FBI agent (Maika Monroe) whose past seems to hold a key to a decades-long serial killer suburban spree.

In the opening flashback scene of "Longlegs," a young girl walks out of her house to meet a stranger on her snow-covered yard. We never see more than the bottom half of his face, but the sense of creepiness is overwhelming. The image, with a scream, cuts out before "Longlegs" properly gets underway.

Twenty five years later, that girl (Monroe's Lee Harker) is now grown and brought into the investigation. She's preternaturally good at decoding the serial killer's choreographed targets, but her psychological astuteness has a blind spot. In Osgood's gripping if trite horror film about an elusive boogeyman, the most unnerving mystery is the foggy, fractured nature of childhood memory.

"Longlegs," which opens in theaters Thursday, is arriving on its own wave of mystery thanks to a lengthy, enigmatic marketing campaign.



This image released by Neon shows Maika Monroe in a scene from "Longlegs."

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Is the buzz warranted? That may depend on your tolerance for a very serious procedural that's extremely adept at building an ominous slow burn yet nevertheless leads to a pile-up of horror tropes: satanic worship, scary dolls and an outlandish Nicolas Cage.

It's a credit to the harrowingly spell-binding first half of "Longlegs" and to Monroe that the film's third act disappoints. After that prologue presented in a boxy ratio with rounded edges, as if seen through an overhead projector the screen widens. Harker, a terse, solitary detective, is part of a large task force to track down the killer behind

the deaths of 10 families over the course of 30 years. Sent to knock on doors, she gazes up at a second floor window and knows immediately. "It's that one," she tells a partner (Dakota Daulby) whose lack of faith in her intuition quickly proves regrettable.

Harker is brought in for a psych evaluation that demonstrates her strange clairvoyance. Agent Carter (Blair Underwood) gives her all the accumulated evidence, which suggests the same killer every murder scene has a coded letter left signed by Longlegs but at the time points to no intruder within the homes of the murdered. Carter is reminded of Charles

Manson. "Manson had accomplices," Harker reminds him. Also troubling: all of the victims have a daughter with a birthday of the 14th of the month, a trait Harker, naturally, shares.

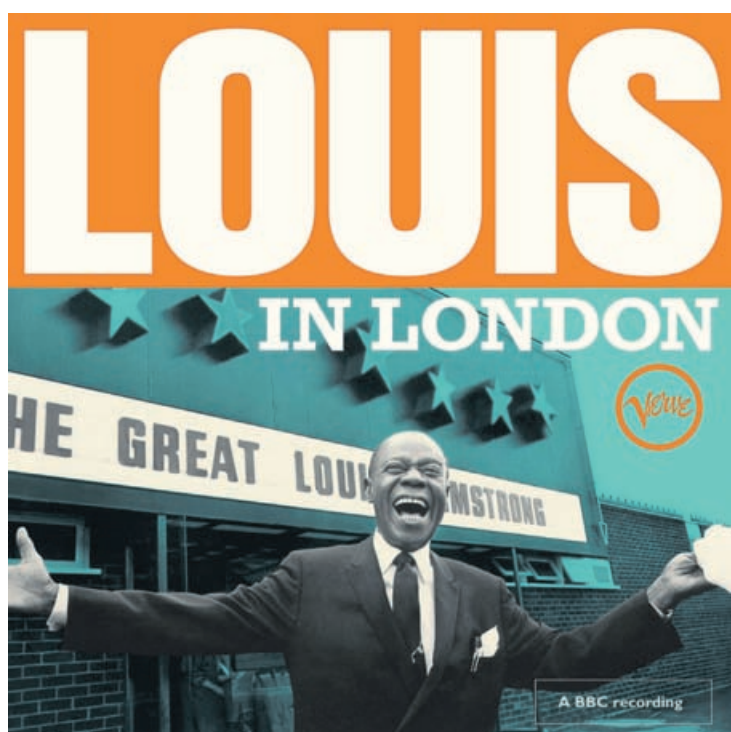
Families are prominent in the narrative, too. Harker occasionally visits her shut-in mother (Alicia Witt) and their brief interactions suggest a knowingness with the cruelty of the world. One time on the phone, Harker tells her she's been busy with "works stuff." "Nasty stuff?" the mom asks. "Yep," she answers.

Scenes of dread follow as they hunt the killer in rural Oregon. They frequent the usual spots: an old crime

scene, a locked up barn, an old witness in a psychiatric hospital. Longlegs (Cage) is skulking about, too, and leaves a letter for Harker. We see him fleetingly at first. He's a bleached, pale figure who, with long white hair, looks increasingly clownish the nearer we get to him. If Manson belonged to the '60s, Longlegs, with his Bob Dylan Rolling Thunder Revue white face, seems a product more in the '70s. T.Rex opens and closes the film and the album cover of Lou Reed's "Transformer" sits above his mirror.

Perkins ("Gretel & Hansel"), is the filmmaking son of Anthony Perkins, who famously played one of the movies' most unsettling characters in Norman Bates of "Psycho." The roots of "Longlegs," which Perkins also wrote, have personal connections for the director, Perkins has said, about his own upbringing and his father's complicated private life. But something deeper struggles to pierce "Longlegs." Its sense of horror seems to come mainly from little besides other movies. "Se7en" and "The Silence of the Lambs" are clear touchstones. Longlegs ultimately feels like more of a stock boogeyman and big-screen vessel for Cage. □

Music Review: 'Louis in London,' a 1968 live album, captures a joyful, late-career Louis Armstrong



This cover image released by Verve/UMG shows "Louis in London (Live at the BBC)" by Louis Armstrong. (Verve/UMG via Associated Press)

By **STEVEN WINE**
Associated Press

At the end of his career, every note from Louis Armstrong still exuded the joy of being alive.

That's true of a live album out Friday titled "Louis in London," heralded in promotional material as his "last great performance." The 13-track set captures Armstrong and a strong five-piece backing combo recorded before an audience at the BBC on July 2, 1968. Armstrong's chronic health issues soon worsened, and he died in 1971. Nearly half the material on "Louis in London" is previously unreleased, and the album provides a snapshot of Armstrong at a peak of popularity. The perfor-

mance took place weeks after he reached No. 1 on the UK charts with "What a Wonderful World."

That song is included, its unabashed sentimentality in defiance of news headlines then and now. Armstrong also has the room swaying to songs from way back when, starting with a hearty reading of his longtime theme song, "When It's Sleepy Time Down South." The set is primarily a vocal album dominated by Armstrong's sunny showmanship and unmistakable baritone. His voice dances through every tune, riding improvised flourishes that include wordless grunts, growls and gurgles. Even the simplest lyric benefits from his distinctive stamp:

He sings "baby" like no one else.

Armstrong's trumpet plays only a supporting role, but his still-brilliant tone makes every entrance a bracing embrace.

The supporting cast, both tight and loose, includes Tyree Glenn on trombone, Joe Muranyi on clarinet, Marty Napoleon on piano, Buddy Catlett on bass and Danny Barcelona on drums.

They form a parade of sizzling soloists on the two instrumental cuts, Dixieland renditions of "(Back Home Again In) Indiana" and "Ole Miss."

The latter tune, by W.C. Handy, is believed to be the first composition Armstrong played in public. □

Jasmine Paolini wins Wimbledon's longest women's semifinal and faces Krejckikova next

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Jasmine Paolini kept coming back, kept coming back, kept coming back, against Donna Vekic in what would become the longest Wimbledon women's semifinal on record after dropping the opening set, after being two games from defeat in each of the last two sets, after twice trailing by a break in the third.

And all the while, this is what Paolini kept telling herself Thursday: "Try, point by point" and "Fight for every ball." Paolini never had won a match at the All England Club until last week and now will participate in her second consecutive Grand Slam final, thanks to a rollicking 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (10-8) victory over the unseeded Vekic across 2 hours, 51 minutes on Centre Court. "This match," said the No. 7-seeded Paolini, who faces No. 31 Barbora Krejckikova for the title, "I will remember forever."

As will many of the thousands who were present or the millions watching on TV. "It was," Paolini said, "a rollercoaster of emotions." The same could be said of the second semifinal, which lasted 44 fewer minutes but contained its own share of plot twists as 2021 French Open champion Krejckikova came back to eliminate 2022 Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Whoever wins on Saturday will be the eighth woman to



Jasmine Paolini of Italy plays a forehand return to Donna Vekic of Croatia during their semifinal match at the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Thursday, July 11, 2024.

Associated Press

leave the All England Club with the title in the past eight editions of the tournament. Krejckikova trailed 4-0 at the start, reeled off four of five games to take the second set, then earned the pivotal break to move ahead 5-3 in the third against Rybakina, who entered the day with a 19-2 career mark at the All England Club.

"During the second set, somewhere in the middle, I was getting my momentum," Krejckikova said. "And when I broke her, I started to be in a zone and I didn't want to leave the zone."

Still, it couldn't approach the drama produced by Paolini and Vekic.

Consider: Vekic, making her debut in a Slam semifinal, ended up claiming more points (118-111), delivering more winners (42-26) and breaking serve more often (4-3).

"She was hitting winners everywhere," Paolini said. But Paolini never went away, eventually converting her third match point when Vekic sent a forehand wide. This showing on the grass courts at Wimbledon follows Paolini's runner-up finish to Iga Swiatek on the red clay at the French Open last month. Paolini, a 28-year-old from Italy, is the first woman to get to the title matches at Roland Garros and the All England Club in

the same season since Serena Williams in 2016.

"These last months have been crazy for me," Paolini said with a laugh.

Her win was anything but easy. Exhausting would be a more appropriate word. Vekic often was in obvious distress, crying between points and while sitting in her changeover chair late in the third set because, she said afterward, of pain in an arm and a leg and often looked up at her guest box with a flushed face. She iced her right forearm between games.

"I thought I was going to die in the third set," said Vekic, who repeatedly closed her

eyes, sighed or shook her head during her news conference.

"I didn't know how," she said, "I could keep playing." How surprising is Paolini's recent surge?

She never had managed to make it past the second round at any major tournament losing in the first or second round in 16 appearances in a row until she got to the fourth round at the Australian Open in January. And then there's this: Paolini's career record at Wimbledon was 0-3 until this fortnight. Indeed, she did not own a single tour-level win on grass anywhere until a tuneup event at Eastbourne last month.

Krejckikova, a 28-year-old from the Czech Republic, is not nearly as out-of-nowhere, given that she has been a Grand Slam champion and ranked No. 2 in singles, as well as a seven-time major champ and No. 1 in doubles. She's also now 6-2 at major tournaments against past Slam champs.

Her mentor, the late Jana Novotna, won Wimbledon in 1998, and Krejckikova teared up while speaking about her influence.

"I have so many beautiful memories, and when I step on the court here, I'm just fighting for every single ball, because I think that's what she would want me to do," Krejckikova said. "I just miss her very much. I miss her so much." □

Bill Belichick joining 'Inside the NFL' for upcoming season

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bill Belichick has added a second media job for the upcoming season.

The CW Network announced Thursday that Belichick will be one of the analysts on "Inside the NFL." Belichick, who coached the New England Patriots to six Super Bowl titles during his 24 years at the helm, will also appear on the Manningcast during "Monday Night Football."

Belichick joins Ryan Clark, Chad Johnson and Chris Long. Johnson and Long each played one season for Belichick in New England.

"I'm thrilled to join my new team at NFL Films and to work on such a historic television franchise," Belichick said in a state-

ment. "I've always appreciated 'Inside the NFL's' depth of analysis, and I hope to bring the same detailed insight to The CW by talking real football with real pros Ryan, Chris and Chad this coming season."

"Inside the NFL," which is in its 48th season, is produced by NFL Films. While Belichick was infamous for his short answers and refusing to engage with reporters while he was a coach, the times he has been revealing and forthcoming have often been on shows or pieces produced by NFL Films. Belichick was nominated for a Sports Emmy for Outstanding Studio Analyst for his work on the 2019 NFL Films series "NFL 100 All-Time Team," which aired on NFL Network. □



New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick speaks with reporters before NFL football practice, Wednesday, Oct. 27, 2021, in Foxborough, Mass.

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U.S. appeals court says some NCAA athletes may qualify as employees under federal wage-and-hour laws

By **MARYCLAIRE DALE**
Legal Affairs Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — College athletes whose efforts primarily benefit their schools may qualify as employees deserving of pay under federal wage-and-hour laws, a U.S. appeals court ruled Thursday in a setback to the NCAA. The court, in the latest challenge to the NCAA's long-held notion of "amateurism" in college sports, said that a test should be developed to differentiate between students who play college sports for fun and those whose effort "crosses the legal line into work."

"With professional athletes as the clearest indicators, playing sports can certainly constitute compensable work," U.S. Circuit Judge L. Felipe Restrepo wrote. "Ultimately, the touchstone remains whether the cumulative circumstances of the relationship between the athlete and



Signage at the headquarters of the NCAA is viewed in Indianapolis, March 12, 2020.

college or NCAA reveal an economic reality that is that of an employee-employer." A colleague, in a concurring opinion, questioned the difficulty of such a process, noting that nearly 200,000 students compete on nearly 6,700 Division I teams. The NCAA had hoped to have the case dismissed, but it will instead go back to the trial

Associated Press

judge for fact finding. The ruling follows a 2021 Supreme Court decision that led the NCAA to amend its rules to allow athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness. In May, the NCAA announced a nearly \$2.8 billion revenue-sharing plan that could steer millions of dollars directly to athletes by next year.

The Division I athletes and former athletes behind the suit in Philadelphia are seeking more modest hourly wages similar to those earned by their peers in work-study programs. They argue that colleges are violating fair labor practices by failing to pay them for the time they dedicate to their sports, which they say can average 30 or more hours per week. Lawyer Paul McDonald, representing the plaintiffs, has suggested that athletes might make \$2,000 per month or \$10,000 per year for participating in NCAA sports. He said that many students need the money for everyday expenses.

"This notion that college athletes cannot be both students and employees is just not accurate when you have student employees on campuses," McDonald said Thursday. "It's just beyond belief, the idea that the athletes

would not meet the same criteria as employees." A district judge had refused to throw out the case, prompting the Indianapolis-based NCAA to ask the appeals court to stop it from going to trial. The three-member panel heard arguments in February. Defendants include the NCAA and member schools including Duke University, Villanova University and the University of Oregon. An NCAA spokesperson did not immediately return messages seeking comment Thursday. The unanimous Supreme Court decision that spawned the NIL payments lifted the ban on college compensation beyond full-ride scholarships. Schools recruiting top athletes now can offer tens of thousands of dollars in education-related benefits such as study-abroad programs, computers and graduate scholarships. □